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FROM WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM
TO THE PRESIDENT
CITE CAP30644

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~~TOP SECRET~~

FOLLOWING IS GENERAL WESTMORELAND'S REPORT ON OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS IN VIETNAM:

ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN NO HIGHLY PUBLICIZED MAJOR OPERATIONS LAUNCHED AGAINST THE NVA, THERE HAS BEEN A GENERAL RESUMPTION OF AGGRESSIVE OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

YESTERDAY, GEN VIEN AND I VISITED GEN THANG, THE NEW IV CORPS COMMANDER, AT CAN THO. GENS ECKHARDT, WEYAND AND EWELL WERE PRESENT. THIS WAS THE INITIAL MEETING ON OUR FORTH-COMING OFFENSIVE. MY PHILOSOPHY WAS EXPRESSED AS FOLLOWS:

DURING THE PAST THIRTY DAYS THE ENEMY TRIED TO EFFECT A COUP. HIS PLANS WERE BASED ON THE TWIN ASSUMPTIONS THAT THE PEOPLE WOULD RISE UP AND JOIN HIS FORCES AND THAT THE FIGHTING SPIRIT OF THE RVNAF WAS LOW. THE RECORD OF THE PAST THIRTY DAYS HAS PROVED THAT THE PEOPLE ARE SOUND, THEY WILL FIGHT FOR THEIR FREEDOM. THE ARMED FORCES HAVE PROVED THAT THEY DO HAVE FIGHTING SPIRIT. THERE WERE NO TRAITORS; NEARLY ALL UNITS FOUGHT WELL. THE ENEMY WAS MISLED BY HIS OWN PRO-PAGANDA.

THE QUESTION IS OFTEN HEARD, "WHEN ARE THE VC GOING TO ATTACK AGAIN?" THIS TYPE OF THINKING IS UNACCEPTABLE. THE VC ARE TIRED, THEY HAVE SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES, THEY ARE STAYING IN THEIR POSITIONS ATTEMPTING TO POSE AS A THREAT, BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, HOPING THAT WE WILL REMAIN DEFENSIVELY ORIENTED AROUND THE CITIES AND NOT ATTACK THEM.

WE MUST STOP THINKING ABOUT THE NEXT VC ATTACK AND START THINKING, ALL OF US, OF CONTINUING TO CARRY THE ATTACK TO THE ENEMY. WE ARE FULLY CAPABLE OF DOING IT. IT IS TRUE THAT OUR FORCES HAVE BEEN OPERATING AT A FAST PACE FOR THIRTY DAYS AND WE HAVE SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES. SOME MAY BE TIRED. HOWEVER, THE MAIN THING NOW IS OUR STATE OF MIND. IT WILL BE THE SIDE THAT PERSEVERES AND CARRYS THE FIGHT TO THE ENEMY THAT WINS. AND WE ARE GOING TO DO IT.

THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY WE ARE MOVING TO A GENERAL OFFENSIVE.

IN IV CORPS GEN THANG HAS JUST TAKEN COMMAND AND HE IS WORKING ON PLANS TO LAUNCH A MAJOR OFFENSIVE IN DINH TUONG PROVINCE, COMMENCING ON 6 OR 7 MARCH. IT WILL INVOLVE A MAJOR PORTION OF THE 7TH ARVN DIVISION AND ABOUT TWO THIRDS OF THE 9TH U.S. DIVISION UNDER GEN EWELL. GEN WEYAND WILL PROVIDE HELO SUPPORT, AN AIR CAVALRY TROOP AND ADDITIONAL ARTILLERY. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE OPERATION WILL BE TO DEFEAT

THE FOUR MAIN FORCE BATTALIONS IN DINH TUONG, RESTORE THE SECURITY AROUND MY THO, SECURE AND REPAVE HIGHWAY 4, REESTABLISH - AND RELOCATE AS NECESSARY - THE REGIONAL FORCES/POPULAR FORCES OUTPOSTS, AND FURTHER THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. THIS OPERATION WILL BE THE FIRST EVENT OF A MAJOR CORPS WIDE OFFENSIVE WHICH GEN THANG WILL INITIATE. IT WILL HAVE ONE NAME (VIETNAMESE) AND WILL BE PROPERLY PUBLICIZED SO AS TO MAKE THE BROADEST POSSIBLE IMPACT.

IN III CORPS, A SIMILAR PLAN IS BEING WORKED OUT BY GENS WEYAND AND KHANG. IT WILL EMBRACE THE FIVE PROVINCES AROUND SAIGON - AND WILL BE A ONE NAMED JOINT U.S./VN OPERATION. IT WILL ALSO BE ONE OF THE LARGEST EVER CONDUCTED IN III CORPS AND WILL CONTINUE UNTIL THE ENEMY IS DEFEATED OR DRIVEN OUT OF THE AREA. IT WILL COMMENCE NEARLY SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE IV CORPS OFFENSIVE AND WILL BE PROPERLY REPORTED SO AS TO HAVE MAXIMUM IMPACT.

AT THE SAME TIME, IN NORTHERN I CORPS, WE WILL MOVE INTO HIGH GEAR IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. WITH OVER 20 PERCENT OF ALL U.S./ARVN MANEUVER BATTALIONS IN THIS AREA, AND WITH THE LOGISTIC SITUATION IMPROVING DAILY, WE ARE IN AN EXCELLENT POSTURE AS TO COMMENCE A BROAD OFFENSIVE.

THE OPERATIONS IN I & III CORPS WILL BE SUPPORTED BY THE MAXIMUM USE OF TACTICAL AIR AND B-52 STRIKES. FOR THE TIME BEING, I MUST KEEP PRIORITY OF AIR AT KHE SANH BUT I AM PREPARED TO MAKE MASSIVE SHIFTS, PARTICULARLY OF B-52S, TO ASHAU VALLEY OR TO III CORPS, WHEN THE WEATHER PERMITS TACTICAL AIR TO PROVIDE VISUAL ATTACK SUPPORT FOR KHE SANH.

IN II CORPS, WE ARE NOT PLANNING ON ONE MAJOR OFFENSIVE. HOWEVER, THE ROKS ARE ON THE MOVE ALONG THE COAST IN A MULTI-BATTALION OPERATION. GEN PEERS IS PREPARED TO WAGE A MAJOR BATTLE AGAINST THE ENEMY FORCES IN KONTUM OR DARLAC PROVINCES. HIS SPIRIT IS AGGRESSIVE AND HE HAS THE EXACT FRAME OF MIND REQUIRED TO CONDUCT THE ECONOMY OF FORCE OPERATIONS WHICH HIS SITUATION REQUIRES. PEERS HAS A NEW COUNTER PART, MAJ GEN LU LAN, WHO AT THE OUTSET HAS DISPLAYED AN AGGRESSIVE SPIRIT.

ON MONDAY GEN VIEN AND I ARE MEETING WITH GENS WEYAND AND KHANG AND THEIR DIVISION COMMANDERS TO DISCUSS THEIR PLANS FOR THE IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS OFFENSIVE STRATEGY.

TOMORROW AFTERNOON VIEN HAS INVITED AT MY SUGGESTION THE FREE WORLD COMMANDERS TO HIS HEADQUARTERS TO GIVE THEM THE BENEFIT OF HIS OFFENSIVE ATTITUDE. SINCE IT IS NOT WITHIN VIEN'S CHARACTER TO USE FORCEFUL LANGUAGE I WILL PROVIDE THE NECESSARY EMPHASIS IN A FOLLOW-UP.

TODAY I WILL VISIT GENS ABRAMS, CUSHMAN AND ROSSON TO REVIEW THEIR PLANS.

I HOPE THAT THE IMPACT OF THESE SIMULTANEOUS MAJOR OPERATIONS WILL CONVINCE THE PEOPLE IN SVN AND WASHINGTON THAT WE ARE NOT WAITING FOR EITHER THE VC TO RESUME THE INITIATIVE, OR FOR SOMEONE TO HELP US. THE TIME IS RIPE TO MOVE OUT AND WE WILL DO SO.

WE WILL EMPHASIZE THE OFFENSIVE NATURE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS IN FUTURE REPORTS, WITHOUT DISTORTING THE PERSPECTIVE.

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